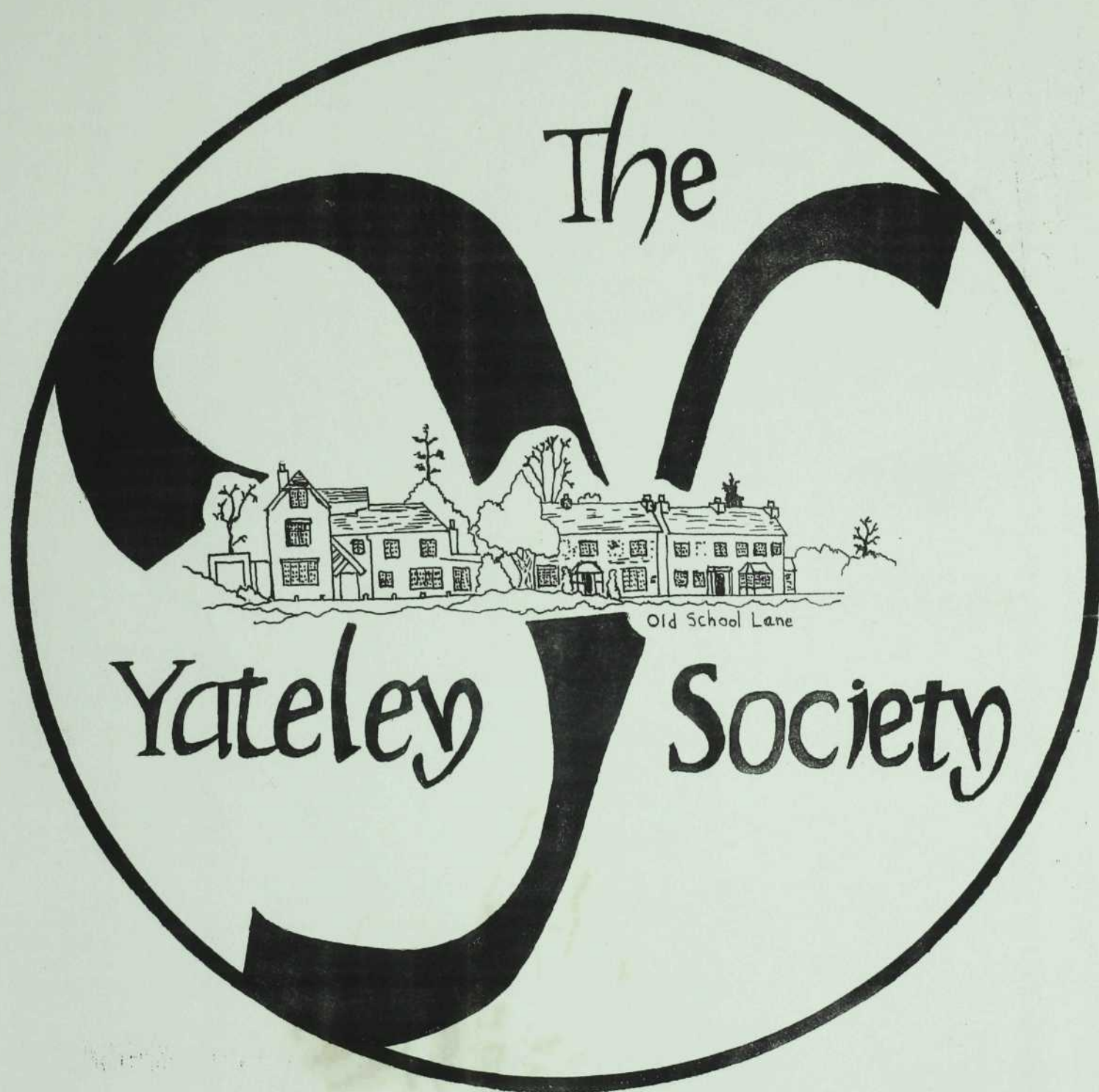


No 31

JUNE 1987



Newsletter

THE YATELEY SOCIETY

Newsletter No. 31

JUNE 1987

Editor: Tony Hocking (Yateley 875158)

THE EDITORIAL.

Dear Member:

As you can see I am trying out a decorative front cover. This is photocopied for simplicity, a Gestetner master will be made if YOU approve the design; PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF THE COVER.

The programme at the back includes some Yateley Society walks and also the remaining Blackwater Valley Project walks, they are all recommended.

Both series of walks finish in October, and by the time you read this the programme for the winter will be being worked on; this raises the questions

"Are winter walks worth having?"

"If so, where shall we go?"

The attendance at winter walks is very weather dependent and so the first question is difficult to answer. The second question arises because after all the walks we have had there is a shortage of ideas. PLEASE HELP by letting RICHARD JOHNSTON (Yateley 872832) or me know your views on the desirability of winter walks, and any good ideas you have for walks.

A personal comment - I suggested the walk for September 6th because I worked at Ambarrow Court for the last few years that it was an outstation of RAE Farnborough, I find its transformation to a park most pleasant, it could so easily have been built on.

!!!!!!! DON'T FORGET THE BARBECUE JULY 25 !!!!!!!

PLEASE NOTE:

COPY DATE FOR THE NEXT "STOP PRESS" - 1 August 87 (REMEMBER, ONLY URGENT ITEMS ACCEPTED)

COPY DATE FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER - 12 September 87.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

May Fayre

This was a great success thanks to a lot of hard work by all concerned. I would particularly like to congratulate Tony Hocking for yet another excellent set of display panels showing a cross section of the Society's activities as well as a part of the Yateley Hall survey being undertaken by Richard Johnston and his team.

Our thanks also go to Stephanie Pattenden and her team who once again produced a popular range of food and goods which sold well and contributed nicely to the Society's funds.

Thanks also to Malcolm Pope, not only for the excellent display on the Toad Campaign, but also for all the hard work he did earlier in the year to "help a toad across the road".

Finally my thanks to Ted Dowling for the loan of his scaffolding, van and expertise together with the team of constructors.

This is one of the occasions when we are able to bring all members of the Society together and show what a success we can achieve.

Conservation Projects

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will see that we have organised several projects on Yateley Common, in the Royal Oak Valley and at various ponds. Do try and get along to one or more of these projects, they are usually good fun and the more people that come the more enjoyable it is for all, as the May Fayre demonstrated.

Planning Group

A lot of hard work continues to be done by this group in monitoring and commenting on local planning matters, currently including Yateley Hall, Hart District Plan and the N.E. Hants Structure Plan. Dennis Espley has recently agreed to take over the running of this group from Peter Tipton and I would ask you to give him your full support. I would like to record the Society's thanks to Peter Tipton for running the group for the first part of the year.

Membership of Groups

I would like to draw members attention to the fact that our various activity groups are open to all members, you can attend any group that appeals to you. I think some members would be quite surprised at the work that goes on in the various groups.

YATELEY HALL

by Michael Holroyd

The History Group's investigation of Yateley Hall has become a major project involving a number of people in several different kinds of activity - surveying the building and grounds, making a photographic record, gathering documentary evidence and questioning people who lived at the Hall. Members may have seen some of the results so far in the Society's exhibition at the May Fayre or later in Yateley library.

One of the aims of the investigation is to help the Society influence the planning process which will decide the future use of the Hall and its grounds.

The planning story so far is as follows. The applications by the new owners to convert the Hall into offices and to build houses in the grounds have been refused by Hart District Council. The applicants have appealed to the Department of the Environment, who will hold a public inquiry. Hart have issued a substantial draft policy statement outlining the history of the Hall and the types of use which they would consider appropriate. The Society has submitted detailed comments on this policy statement, based on our investigations, and we hope that these will influence the final form of the document.

Some of the documents connected with the Hall which have so far been discovered are as follows:

1. A thesis prepared by Sister Teresa Bourne-Vanneck who taught at the Convent School in the 1950s, including a description of the Hall and a collection of water-colour paintings of it.
2. An album of photographs taken at the Hall in the 1920s and 1930s.

3. Several newspaper articles and advertisements, including one of 1810 giving measurements of rooms.
4. A magistrates' order made in 1797 at the request of John Halhed diverting a road which ran to the west of the ha-ha.
5. The will of Rumney Diggle, the owner of the Hall who died there in 1754.
6. A letter written by Henry Foxcroft from the Hall in 1722, now deposited in the State Papers, in which as a magistrate he describes how a man arrested for damaging fishponds at Heckfield had been released by his confederates. Shortly afterwards Parliament passed an act introducing capital punishment for various offences, including damaging fishponds.

THE OTHER END OF THE SCALE ? by Tony Hocking

While on holiday in Kent Mary and I paid a short visit to Faversham. This proved to be a very interesting visit because it revealed, in no uncertain way, how a Civic Amenity Society can thrive under favourable circumstances.

Yateley has a thin scattering of old buildings, very few of them officially "listed"; Faversham has over 400 listed buildings! Many of which are in attractive groups.

Yateley has no history of industry, bar the basic village essentials of mill, saddler and blacksmith; Faversham has seen everything from brickworks to brewing to shipbuilding to gunpowder mills and its own port.

All old domestic and retail buildings in the old part of Faversham, and those now enveloped by modern development, appear to be kept in impeccable condition and where possible surrounded by pedestrian precincts.

Some of the old industrial buildings are still in use, some, because of changing economics, have long ago fallen into disrepair. The Faversham Society has taken one of the derelict water-driven gunpowder mills under its wing and has restored it as an example of Faversham's industrial past. (Needless to say it was not open the day we were there!) The local council have made a well signposted footpath to the mill from the town centre along the old tail-race.

For some years the Yateley Society has been toying with a "History Trail" leaflet for Yateley, this is progressing, but the sooner we have one the better. The Faversham Society has produced a simple but comprehensive leaflet "A walk around the town and port of Faversham Kent", they do have the advantage that the local town and district councils publish the leaflet, which is free. (I have a copy if anyone wishes to see it.) As an indication that the society has been going longer than ours - the leaflet had reached its 9th edition in 1984!

To our mind the crowning glory of the Faversham Society is the "Fleur de Lys Heritage Centre", created by, and staffed every day by volunteers from the society. The centre is housed in an attractively decorated ex public house in the centre of the town; it contains all the tourist literature one could want about Faversham and the rest of Kent; plus an extensive museum devoted to all aspects of Faversham life, history and industrial archaeology. For 30p you can spend a

happy hour or two in this mine of information. If you ever go to Faversham you must see it, both for the museum and for an example of what can be done by a society like ours

The Faversham Society is claimed to be "one of the biggest in Kent", I do not know any details, but this is in a town with a population of only 15,000 - far smaller than Yateley!

Once our enthusiasm had subsided a feeling of mixed envy and despair began to take its place when we thought of the potential in Yateley and of our achievements so far in comparison to Faversham.

Then we had second thoughts. After all, Yateley has a largely transient population unlikely to take much interest in the locality, yet we have a hard core of involved, dedicated members and a fair number of supporters. Yateley may not have old industry but we have a vast natural history potential which we have made much of; and we have all our commons and open spaces to look after, Faversham has none. All in all we decided that given the limited potential in Yateley, and the unfortunate type of population, we are not doing so badly making use of what we have got!

THE NATURAL HISTORY PROGRAMME

by Irene Draper

After a short break the Natural History group has resumed its monthly evening meetings. These will take the form of round the table discussion groups. One particular topic will be selected for each meeting, but there will also be time for a general chat about what is to be seen and where to see it.

At the May meeting Malcolm Pope (Yateley Help a Toad Across The Road) told us about the Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group which has been set up by the Surrey Wildlife Trust. Malcolm, because of his toad scheme, has been invited to join the group. Members are attempting to survey all the local ponds for frogs, toads and newts and Malcolm hopes that Yateley Society members will become involved in this project. (See "A New Pond Survey" in this issue.)

We next looked at some galls and talked a little about them, what they are, why they form, where they can be seen. Oak trees are well worth close examination through the summer as 40 or so types of gall can be found on them. Many galls such as oak apple, marble, cherry, knopper, spangle and silk button are easy to see. Most can be found on oaks growing on the village green. The BBC Wildlife Magazine (May issue) has a very interesting article on galls - anyone wishing to read this article is welcome to borrow it from me.

The June meeting was a walk in Simons Wood looking for orchids amongst other things.

Not far from Simons Wood is Ambarrow Court, once the site of a large house, now owned by Berkshire County Council and newly opened as a small Country Park. There are some fine trees, many of them labelled, and in spring and early summer daffodils and bluebells. The park has good parking (off the Lower Wokingham Road A321), a firm path all round with benches at intervals and picnic spots - well worth a visit!
(See the walk for Sept 6th)

July and August there are no meetings. September starts the autumn programme. One member recently pointed out how many different conifers grow in the forestry around Yateley; so we will begin by attempting to identify some of these trees by looking at foliage and

ones. Over the summer several more galls will have appeared on the oaks and we will also look at these.

In October Jack and Helen Edwards will lead a discussion on feeding birds in the garden. There will be several types of feeder to look at; some that can be bought from shops or the RSPB, others that can be made at home at very little cost. I know that many of you get great pleasure from watching birds in your gardens; if you have any ideas or tips on keeping cats and squirrels away, or for attracting some of the more unusual birds to feed please do join us and share your ideas with the rest of the group.

I hope these meetings will prove interesting and that some new faces will join us for our round the table discussions.

Dates of meetings (Yateley Centre, room B.2.3, at 7:30):

Conifers - September 10th

Feeding Birds in the Garden - October 8th

Editor's note: All members and friends are welcome to meetings, the term "group" does not imply any restriction.

A NEW POND SURVEY

by Valerie Kerslake

Following the Toad Rescue Campaign that Malcolm Pope organised in the spring, he was invited to a meeting of a newly formed Surrey Reptile and Amphibian Group to discuss a survey of amphibians in ponds all over the country. The information collected will eventually be sent to Leicester Polytechnic. Malcolm was asked if he could get some of the ponds around here covered and he thought there would certainly be members of the Society and other Yateley people who would be happy to dabble in water counting frogs, toads and newts. He would be glad to hear from anyone interested, even though not very much can be done until next spring. His number is Yateley 872782.

The members of the new group are all professional naturalists, expert in one field or another, who felt that reptiles and amphibians were not getting their fair share of attention in this part of the country. We hope that one of them (possibly Howard Inns who gave us such an excellent talk last February) will be able to come and describe the technique of dipping, perhaps with a field demonstration.

There is no final figure yet for toads - and others - saved as they crossed the road earlier this year (a good many record cards have still not been returned), but the count so far is about 650 for toads frogs and newts together, in spite of there being very, very few on some usually popular crossing spots. No human casualties were reported, but looking ahead to next year toad rescuers should be careful to wear some light-coloured clothing. Even a white paper hat would be effectively conspicuous. (Here's a chance for origami practitioners!)

If you have been surprised to see toad crossing signs in May and June, here is the explanation. The Highway Authority agreed to erect them for two months to cover the migration period, but due to pressure of work they were, unfortunately, two months late in putting them up.

- AND A FLOWER SURVEY TOO

The Botanical Society of the British Isles (for amateurs and professionals) intends to remap the British flora by recording in detail the flowering plants (that means trees as well) and ferns in a

random selection of 10km squares across the country. The south-east corner of one of these includes the northern and central part of Yateley, up to about Handford Lane and Monteagle Lane, which leaves out all of Yateley Common except a scrap at Cricket Hill, but includes Yateley Green and Darby Green and Moulsham Lane and all the Trilakes area

Tony Mundell of Fleet has taken on the recording of the Hampshire and Surrey part of the square, and would be glad to hear of plants (wild ones, that is!) that seem a little bit uncommon around here - always a very difficult judgement to make for most of us. If anyone with likely candidates for inspection tells Irene Draper (Yateley 870470) she will pass the names on to Tony, who of course must actually look at the plants himself. Irene has also (recklessly?) offered to try to identify any mystery plants that are found in this area.

HISTORY MEETINGS

by Michael Holroyd

Wednesday 22 July An outdoor meeting to look at the traces of Blackbushe Airport which remain on Yateley Common, with the help of a detailed war-time map. Meet in the lane behind Blackbushe Metals, opposite the earthed up "gipsy" car park near the south end of Vigo Lane.

Wednesday 23 September A "workshop" session on how to trace the history of old houses in Yateley. This will be a chance to have a look at some of the publications and documents belonging to the Society which throw light on the history of houses. These include maps, directories, census records, rate lists, parish registers, deeds, wills and sales particulars. Anyone interested in a particular house in Yateley should be able to make a start on tracing its history ... and perhaps follow it up afterwards?

Wednesday 28 October Geoff Hoare will follow up the illustrated talk he gave in May with "Yateley Lost and Found: Part 2". This time Geoff will concentrate on St Peter's Church, St Peter's Cottage, and Kneller's Cottages, and will show slides of these buildings as they were in the past and as they are today.

Indoor meetings will be in the Yateley Centre, Room B.2.3, at 7:30pm.

NAME THIS POND

by Valerie Kerslake

There is a new pond on Yateley Common, south of Brandy Bottom, that needs a new name. It began as a marshy dip in the ground, was reinforced a few years ago by the gas pipe along its lower edge where the soil became compacted to form a dam, and further encouraged two years ago when the Countryside Ranger, Peter Dinsdale, dug it out to make a proper pond. It is known as the Gas Pipe Pond, which is perfectly clear but rather a handicap for a really very attractive young pond, so suggestions for a better name are sought.

The pond is filled from a gully which collects rainwater from the rising ground on three sides; it has no spring or stream feeding it. Until last March it had a rather derelict birchwood on each side but that has now been felled and one can look down towards the pond from the heather-covered slope to the east. On that side a chemical stump-killer was applied to the tree stumps; on the west they were left untreated so there should soon be a bushy green coppice growing there. Deer come to drink at the edge of the water; we know there are

newts (having put some in last year); and pond life will increase with so much more light reaching it.

There is no set convention for naming ponds on the common. Wyndhams was called after the 18th century Mr Wyndham who made it; School (or Hospital) pond is close to the old school (later hospital); Stroud pool uses its ancient name meaning a wet or boggy place; the shallow Gravel Pit pond was just that; and is sometimes called Haywards pond after Haywards Cottage nearby. All suggestions should be sent to the editor, and neither he nor, as far as I know, anyone else is offering prizes.

MEMBERSHIP RECORDS

by Geoff Hoare

With subscription renewals falling due on the anniversary of a member joining the Society record keeping using a normal card index was becoming more and more time consuming.

To alleviate this the information contained on the file cards has been transferred to my home computer; while curing the original problem this has highlighted the omission, from a large proportion of the records, of details of members' particular interests.

To update the record, so enabling members to be informed of special events they may be particularly interested in, etc, would members please complete the questionnaire below and return it to me at 1, Blakes Ride or to any committee member, or just a phone call to me on Yateley 872948 will do.

.....

INTERESTS.

Name Tel. No.

Please tick the relevant interests below:

Old Houses..... Family History..... Archaeology..... Maps.....

Urban Development..... Plant Surveys..... Animal Surveys.....

Ecology..... Open Spaces..... Conservation..... Footpaths.....

General Natural History..... Planning..... Conducted Walks.....

Ponds..... Willing to take part in ACTIVE Conservation work.....

Any interest not listed or skills/occupation which might benefit the Society.....(Enter details here)

.....

YATELEY SOCIETY PROGRAMME 1987 (FROM JUNE 24)

- June -

Wed	24	HISTORY - YATELEY HALL - A roundup of recent research.	Y.C. B.2.3	7:30pm
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- July -

Sat	4	CONSERVATION IN PRACTICE - Bracken Bashing. Meet in the lane behind Blackbushe Metals, opposite the earthed up "gipsy" car park near the south end of Vigo Lane.	Vigo Lane Map ref SU 817 591	2:15pm
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Thurs	16	Monthly Review of Local Planning	Y.C. B.2.4	7:30pm
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Wed	22	HISTORY - BLACKBUSHE AIRPORT - An outdoor meeting to look at surviving traces. Meet in the lane behind Blackbushe Metals, opposite the earthed up "gipsy" car park near the south end of Vigo Lane.	Vigo Lane Map ref SU 817 591	7:30pm
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***** TICKETS FROM:-

Sat	25	** SUMMER BARBECUE at BARCLAY HOUSE	** DAVID AND PAM HARVERSON ** or from ** TONY HOCKING
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***** !!! BOOK NOW !!!

Ticket price: £2:50

Vicarage Road

7:30pm

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- July continued -

Sun	26 FLOWER WALK - The West end of Yateley Common - Leader Valerie Kerslake	Top of Little Vigo Map Ref SU 809 596	2:30pm
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- August - (Holiday season - no formal meetings except Planning)

Thurs	20 Monthly Review of Local Planning	Y.C. B.2.3	7:30pm
Sun	23 CONSERVATION IN PRACTICE - Rubbish clearance in the pond and the wood round about.	Chandlers Lane Pond	2:15pm

- September -

Sun	6 WALK - Ambarrow Court - a good conversion of a semi-industrial site into a country park, plus Ambarrow Hill N.T. area. Leader Tony Hocking	Ambarrow Court car park off A321 Map Ref SU 825 626	2:30pm
Thurs	10 NATURAL HISTORY - Identification of conifers found locally	Y.C. B.2.3	7:30pm
Thurs	17 Monthly Review of Local Planning	Y.C. B.2.3.	7:30pm
Sun	20 CONSERVATION IN PRACTICE - Rubbish Clearance and Ditch Digging in the Royal Oak Valley Starts at 10:30am, come along when you can, for as long as you can. Every little helps! - WHY NOT BRING A PICNIC LUNCH?	Old Welmore	ALL DAY
Wed	23 HISTORY - Old houses in Yateley: tracing their history. A workshop session looking at publications and documents.	Y.C. B.2.3	7:30pm

- October -

Sun	4 WALK - Bramshill Forest. Forestry, Hartley Wintney water works, etc Leader Malcolm Pope.	Car park opposite sawmills near A30 Map ref SU 782 586	2:30pm
Thurs	8 NATURAL HISTORY - Feeding birds in your garden Discussion led by Jack and Helen Edwards.	Y.C. B.2.3	7:30pm
Sat	10 CONSERVATION ON THE COMMON - Tree clearance - Meet in the lane behind Blackbushe Metals, opposite the earthed up "gipsy" car park near the south end of Vigo Lane.	Vigo Lane Map Ref SU 817 591	2:15pm
Thurs	22 Monthly Review of Local Planning	Y.C. B.2.3.	7:30pm
Wed	28 HISTORY - Yateley Lost and Found: Part 2 An illustrated talk by Geoff Hoare.	Y.C. B.2.3	7:30pm

BLACKWATER VALLEY PROJECT GUIDED WALKS

THESE WALKS ARE ALWAYS INTERESTING AND ARE THOROUGHLY RECOMMENDED

- June -

SUN 28 EDGEBARROW WOODS. Heathland and woodland management and conservation. 2 miles. No dogs please.
Meet 2:30pm, Edgebarrow wood car park off A3095 between Crowthorne and Sandhurst. (Map Ref 837630) Led by Bracknell Ranger Service

- July -

SAT 11 FLEET POND NATURE RESERVE. Exploration of habitats, flora and fauna. Wellingtons advised.
Meet 2:00pm, car park north east of Fleet Pond, off B3014 Fleet to Cove road. (Map Ref 824553) Led by Fleet Pond Society.

SUN 19 DEVILS HIGHWAY & FINCHAMPSTEAD. Farmland, Finchampstead village, Blackwater river. 4.5 miles.
Meet 1st car park on left, California Country Park off Nine Mile Ride. (Map Ref 784650) Led by S.E. Berks Ramblers

SUN 26 FARNHAM PARK. Historical, social, natural aspects of the conservation area. 2 miles. Dogs must be on lead.
Meet 2:30pm Farnham Park car park off Folly Hill, A287. (Map Ref 837475). Led by Waverley Ranger Service.

WED 29 BLACKWATER VALLEY PARK. Short nature walk along Blackwater River. Led by Camberley Natural History Society.
Meet 7:00pm car park in Admiralty Way off A321, at traffic lights just south of Blackwater. (Map Ref 856597)

- August -

SUN 9 ALDERSHOT MILITARY CAMP. History of Aldershot Camp. Suitable pushchairs and wheelchairs.
Meet 2:30pm car park at Basingstoke Canal/ Queens Ave junction. (Map Ref 867523) Led by Hon Director of Aldershot Military Historical Trust.

THURS 13 ROWHILL NATURE RESERVE. Woodland habitats, source of the Blackwater, etc. 2 hours, refreshments. Children very welcome.
Meet 7:15pm Reserve car park, Cranmore Lane, just off A325, Aldershot. (Map Ref 848499) Led by Rowhill Nature Reserve Society.

SUN 16 BRAMSHILL PLANTATION & HEATH WARREN. Forestry Commission woods. 4 miles. Led by Mid Berks Ramblers.
Meet 11:00am, north side of footbridge, New Mill, Eversley. Park on verge of lane from A327 to New Mill ford.

SUN 23 GRAVEL EXTRACTION IN BLACKWATER VALLEY. Short guided tour around former extraction site owned by Hall Aggregates.
Meet 2:45pm car park of "Imperial" P.H. by Farnborough North Camp Station. (Map Ref 876566). Led by company representative.

- September -

SUN 6 ARCHAEOLOGY OF ALDERSHOT COMMON. Wellington Statue, to Jubilee Hill, looking for relics. 1.5 miles with steep climbs!
Meet 2:30pm Wellington Monument car park signed from A325. (Map Ref 853512) Led by Aldershot Historical and Archaeological Society.

SUN 13 SIMONS WOOD, FINCHAMPSTEAD. 3.5 miles along ridges overlooking the Blackwater Valley.
Meet 2:30pm Nat Trust car park, Simons Wood off B3348 Wellingtonia Avenue. (Map Ref 813635) Led by National Trust members.

SUN 20 FUNGI ON YATELEY COMMON. 4 miles looking for fungi.
Meet 2:30pm Wyndhams Pool car park (Map Ref 822597) Led by Hampshire C.C. Recreation Dept.

SUN 27 ASH VALE - TIPS ON LANDSCAPE. 2.5 miles looking at restored tips and gravel pits; the positive use of derelict land.
Meet 2:30pm car park (large brown gate) at western end of Lakeside Rd, Ash Vale. (Map Ref 884519). Led by Blackwater Valley Project.

- October -

SUN 18 EDGEBARROW WOODS - FUNGUS FORAY. Identifying fungi of woodland and heathland. No dogs please.
Meet 2:30pm, Edgebarrow wood car park off A3095 between Crowthorne and Sandhurst. (Map Ref 837630) Led by Bracknell Ranger Service

For more details, or a Guided Walks Brochure contact Irene Draper (Yateley B70470) or Joanna Forbes, Blackwater Valley Project,
c/o Planning Dept, Rushmoor Borough Council, Farnborough Road, Farnborough Hants GU14 7JU
(Tel Farnborough 516222 extn 396 in office hours)